

committed to raising awareness at the federal level about the needs of women, I rely upon them for guidance. From a woman's right to make her own reproductive health choices, to supporting efforts to thwart domestic violence, to addressing the life quality issue of retirement security, I have had the opportunity to listen, to learn and to act on each of these issues in Congress. I encourage my colleagues to forge the same relationship of mutual reliance with any organization representing women in their respective states. I firmly believe that we can never shy away from efforts to understand, and eventually ameliorate the impacts of discrimination, low wages and lack of opportunities.

I extend my best wishes to the Governor's Commission on Women and to honor their very notable accomplishments over the past 35 years.●

CHILDREN WITH BRACHIAL PLEXUS INJURIES

● Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an issue which affects children across the country.

Brachial plexus injuries (BPI), also known as Erb's palsy, occur when the nerves which control the muscles in the shoulders, arms and hands are injured. Any or all of the nerves which run from the spine to the arms and hands may be paralyzed. Often this injury is caused when an infant's brachial plexus nerves are stretched in the birth canal.

What is devastating about BPI is that the children will have paralyzed arms and hands which may be misshapen or extending out from the body at unnatural angles. This can retard a child's physical development, making everyday tasks such as coloring, drawing, dressing and going to the bathroom, which their peers can perform with no trouble, almost impossible. The feeling in the children's arms and hands is similar to how a non-paralyzed person's arm feels when he or she sleeps on it. This numbness leads to more serious injuries—toddlers and young children will accidentally or purposely burn or mutilate themselves because they lack feeling in their extremities. Some children can undergo expensive surgery and therapy and, though never fully recovering, can regain some normal function of their arms and hands. However, many children suffer permanent, debilitating paralysis from which they never fully recover.

On Thursday, October 21, I sponsored a meeting between members of the United Brachial Plexus Network (UBPN), surgeons, occupational therapists and experts from the Social Security Administration to discuss why so many families with children with brachial plexus injuries were being turned down for Supplemental Security Income despite seeming to meet the qualifications for such payments as laid out in the Social Security Administration handbook.

The Social Security Administration gave a presentation explaining the statutory qualifications for receiving SSI. Their presentations were followed by presentations by surgeons and therapists explaining how children with BPI function and why they feel children paralyzed by BPI should be eligible for SSI payments because of their disability.

Most moving were the presentations made by children with BPI and parents of BPI children. These courageous people talked about their daily lives and the difficulties children with BPI must endure in order to perform everyday tasks.

I want to commend UBPN board member Kathleen Kennedy from my home state of Iowa, Iowa State Senator Kitty Rehberg and Sharon Gavagan, who also sits on the board for UBPN, for their hard work and dedication in organizing the meeting between the UBPN and the Social Security Administration. I want to thank the surgeons and therapists who traveled from Texas to make presentations. I also want to commend Susan Daniels, Kenneth Nibali of the Social Security Administration and the experts from SSA for their willingness to travel from Baltimore to participate in the meeting. I am encouraged by their willingness to consider issuing new guidelines to the personnel in the SSA field offices regarding brachial plexus injuries.

We must work to ensure that everyone who meets the guidelines for receiving SSI has the opportunity to apply for the benefits and be given a fair hearing. I look forward to seeing the new guidelines from SSA, and I am eager to continue working with the Social Security Administration on this issue.●

SEQUENTIAL REFERRALS—S. 225 AND S. 400

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that S. 225 and S. 400 be sequentially referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. I further ask consent that if these bills are not reported out of the Banking Committee by November 2, the bills then be automatically discharged from the committee and placed on the calendar.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ENZI). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CRAIG. I ask unanimous consent that a letter to Senator LOTT relative to the two bills, S. 225 and S. 400, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the letter was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, October 26, 1999.

Hon. TRENT LOTT,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR LOTT: We respectfully request that unanimous consent be sought so that the Committee on Banking, Housing,

and Urban Affairs may be granted a sequential referral of the "Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act Amendments of 1999" (S. 400) and the "Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act Amendments of 1999" (S. 225). These bills have been referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs, although they contain housing provisions which are under the express jurisdiction of the Banking Committee.

If S. 400 and S. 225 are not reported out by the Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs by November 2, 1999, such bills will be automatically discharged from the Committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

PHIL GRAMM,
Chairman, Committee
on Banking, Housing
and Urban Affairs.

WAYNE ALLARD,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Housing and Transportation.

BEN NIGHTHORSE
CAMPBELL,
Chairman, Committee
on Indian Affairs.

PAUL SARBANES,
Ranking Member,
Committee on Banking,
Housing and Urban Affairs.

JOHN F. KERRY,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Housing and Transportation.

DANIEL INOUE,
Vice Chairman, Committee on Indian Affairs.

MULTIDISTRICT, MULTIPARTY, MULTIFORUM TRIAL JURISDICTION ACT OF 1999

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 341, H.R. 2112.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2112) to amend title 28, United States Code, to allow a judge to whom a case is transferred to retain jurisdiction over certain multidistrict litigation cases for trial, and to provide for Federal jurisdiction of certain multiparty, multiforum civil actions.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on the Judiciary, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Multidistrict Jurisdiction Act of 1999".

SEC. 2. MULTIDISTRICT LITIGATION.

Section 1407 of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the third sentence of subsection (a), by inserting "or ordered transferred to the transferee or other district under subsection (i)" after "terminated"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(i)(1) Subject to paragraph (2), any action transferred under this section by the panel may